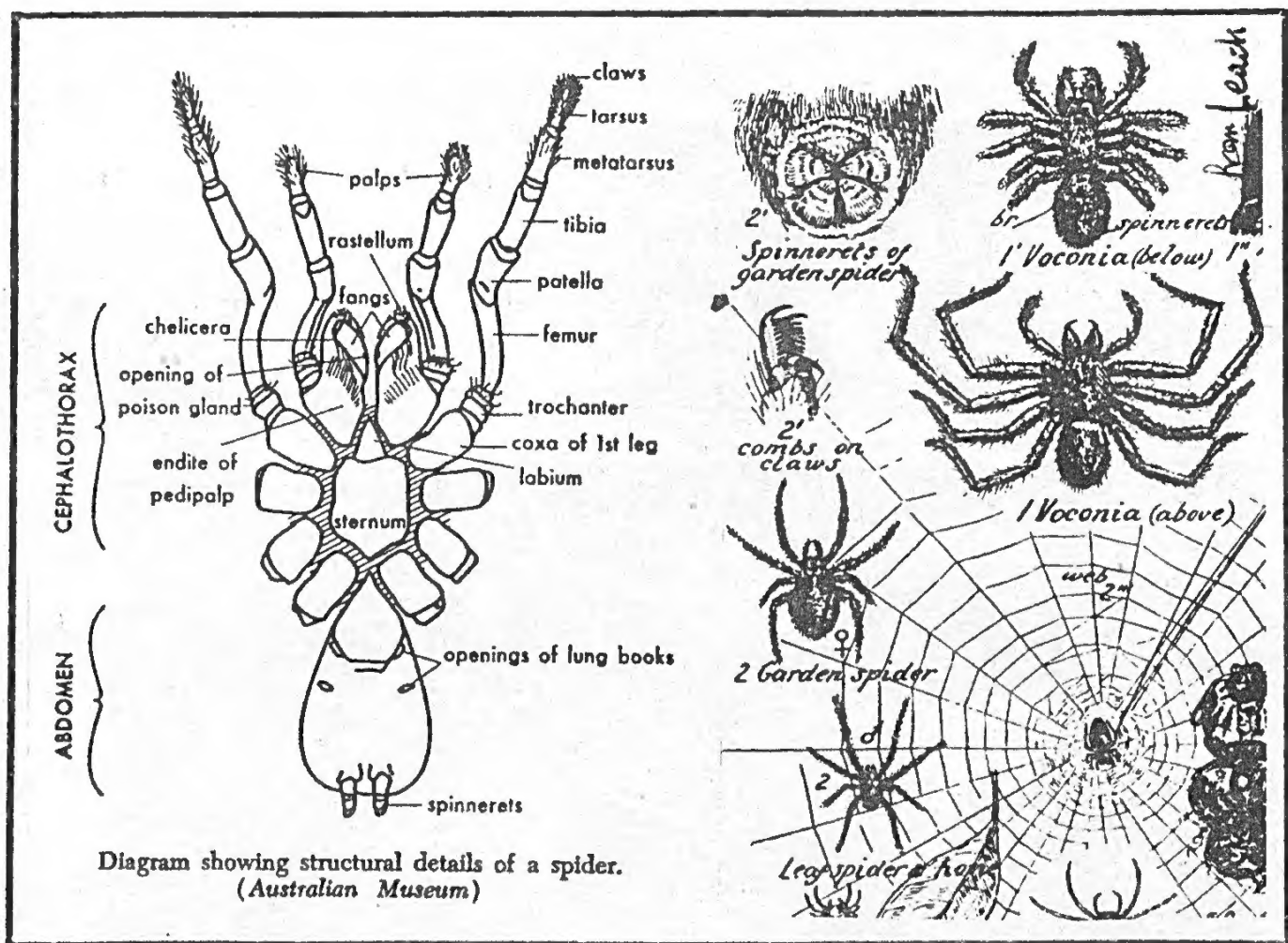


Field Naturalists Club of Ballarat *Incorporated.*

MAY 1992

EXCURSION - NEWS SHEET

Meeting	May 1	Spiders. - Mr R Henderson
Meeting	June 5	Waterfowl of Three Continents - Dr F Harrap
Excursion	May 3	Durham Lead Forest - Mr G Binns
Excursion	June 7	Linton Flora and Fauna Reserve - Mr G Binns



President: Dr K McDonnell Ph.053 326800
Secretary: Mr J Gregurke 394993
Treasurer: Mrs F Williamson 327631
Editor: Mr L Fink 052 861319

Meetings as specified are held at the School of Mines and Industries, Lydiard Street Sth., Art Building, commencing at 7.30 p.m.
EXCURSIONS, AS SPECIFIED, COMMENCE FROM CROCKERS, cnr. STURT AND ARMSTRONG STS., BALLARAT, at 9.30 a.m. for FULL DAY OUTINGS OR AT 1.30 p.m. for HALF DAY.

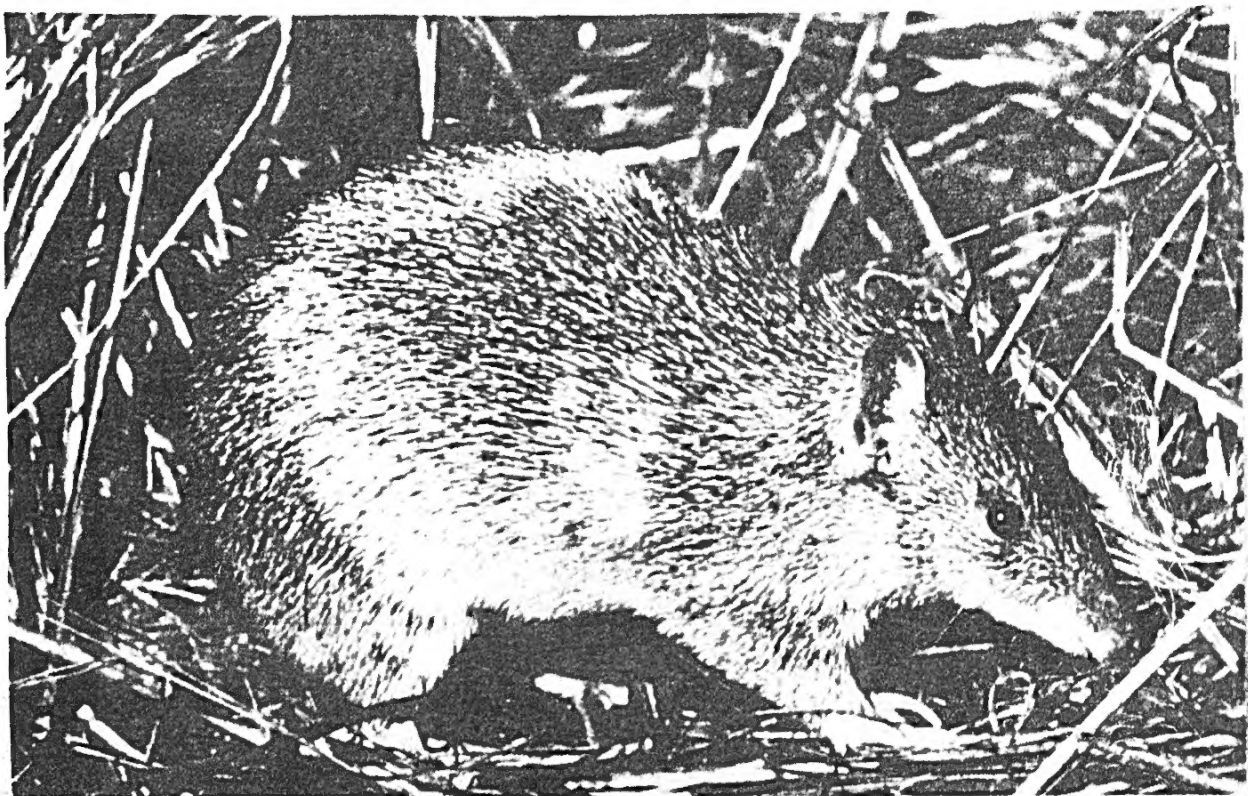


Field Reports: March Meeting

- Ken Hammond Grey Butcherbird heard calling at Wendouree in the mornings.
- Ken McDonnell Grey Butcherbird with young at Invermay.
- Allan Morrison White-winged Chough in Lake Street, Wendouree.
- Florence Williamson Two Grey Currawongs tearing at borer hole in Ovens Wattle. Skinks in house at Ballarat North.
- Pat Murphy Enfield Forest Park to become Enfield State Park in October. Boundaries to remain basically the same.

Diary Dates.

Committee Meeting At Ken McDonnell's Home Davies Rd. Invermay Thursday May 21st at 8pm.



Short nosed bandicoot (*Isodon obesulus*).

Photo: Dr. J. Owen

A Bird List From King Island

Elizabeth and John Stayt went to King Island in early April, they said the bird life is fantastic. Using Birds of Australia Simpson and Day. They Saw;-

- 300 Black swans near Cape Wickham.
- 13 Black Swans in the estuary of the Ettnik R.
- 4 White faced heron.
- 5 Californian Quail.
- 6 - 12 Common Turkey in flocks
- 5 Great Skua.
- 6 Little Black Cormorant.
- 4 Brownfaced Shag.
- 6 Common Pheasants.
- 5 Brown Quail
- 26 Plover Type not clear, in one paddock.
- 1 Royal Albatross, Grassy Harbour.
- 4 Shy Albatross.
- 3 Great Skua.
- 1 Whitebellied Sea Eagle.
- 6 Cape Barren Geese, near Currie
- 2 Australian Kestrel.
- 3 Swamp Quail.
- 4 Blue Winged Parrots.
- 1 Great Egret.
- 8 Chestnut Teal.
- 24 Common Bronzewing Pidgeons.
- 7 Peafowl.

They also saw Swallows, Crows, Seagulls, Willie Wagtail, Finches, Black Eels, many Wallabies, Ka Kangaroos and one Copperhead Snake.

Thank you John and Elizabeth for this very comprehensive list.



Nocturnal Friends. Speaker Rob. Watkins.

Rob Watkins and his Wife are expert Photographers as the slides during the evening showed. They also knew their subjects well.

The first slide was the Lesser Long Eared Bat it is the first to emerge and although they have large ears they are ground feeders and often fall victim to cats.

The little Chocolate Wattle Bat. At the end of hibernation these small bats appear to be eternally hungry.

Rat Kangaroo at Lake Eachem, they live in undisturbed rainforest and need water, they are active for short periods at a time and are found in the Atherton Tablelands.

Boobook Owls feed on insects which they often pick up in their feet. Three to seven young are the usual clutch nesting before Christmas the young are fledged around the end of December.

There are more opportunities to photograph Boobooks than other Owls.

Owlet Nightjars are small that fly at dusk, they nest in holes in trees and limbs.

Tawny Frogmouth this bird flies at evening and often hunt moths around lights and windows, they eat a wide variety of food including insects, moths, beetles frogs and small animals and birds.

Geckoes are another night hunter. The one shown came from the Melville Caves. They have no eyelids and moisten their eyes with their tongue.

Antichinus Stuartii are noisy little animals that often become the prey of owls.

The Tasmanian Tiger Cat is easily distinguished by it's spotted tail, it is a ferocious and aggressive hunter.

The Eastern Native Cat was once prevalent on the mainland but is now scarce, it is swift moving with an acute sense of smell and will eat fruit flowers and small animals and birds.

Another small pouched mammal is the Fat Tailed Dunnart which lives in a wide variety of habitats even to the Eyre Basin, during the heat of the

day it lives in long burrows. It is called Fat Tailed because it stores food in the shape of fat in it's tail.

Tasmanian Devil are sallowcarnivores that seem to enjoy fighting and brawling over their food, they have an acute sense of smell. Disease nearly wiped them out once but they are now plentiful.

Northern Brown Bandicoot are noisy little animals our slide was taken at Cape Tribulation.

The Cuscus is a tropical animal found on the new Guinea mainland and Cape York Peninsular, they build a platform of vegetation to live on, they are very aggressive animals.

Bush Thicknees (Curlews) these birds were once common in parts of Victoria, now they are much rarer, the photograph was taken near Kyabrim.

Powerful Owls. the Powerful Owl is a very large bird of prey that hunts well into the night, Gliders small koalas and possums and large birds make up it's diet. They nest in large Hollows. Feathertailed Phasgogale or Tuans are small predators that often end up as food for Powerful Owls, they live on a variety of things but are mainly carnivores.

Sugar Gliders live in a nest of leaves and twigs in a hollow, sap and leaves are their usual diet.

Squirrel Gliders are rarer animals they are similar to the sugar glider, in their habits.

Ringtailed and Brush possums are very commonly seen at night and come right into city areas where they become very unpopular.

Rob was thanked in the usual way for a very interesting evening.

L.F.

Members met at Crockers corner and then travelled to Enfield for a full day excursion to explore the Forest Park.

The first stop for the day was made on Incoll Road and members set off for a brisk walk along a grassy bush track. Some tall plants of an attractive *Correa reflexa* (Common Correa) were found, the lovely red flowered form so typical of Enfield forest. Without too much searching, *Monotoca scoparia* (Prickly Broom-heath) was also seen and in full bloom, its dainty small white flowers mostly in threes from the leaf axils. As the day progressed, it was noted that this plant was quite common in the Park, something that is not apparent when it is without flowers. Found too was *Cassytha glabella* (Tangled Dodder-laurel), trailing or clinging to other plants at ground level, its tiny white flowers scattered along the thin thread like stems.

Members then drove onward and made a second stop at the base of Beacon Hill. This hill is noted for its low cover of spring flowering tea trees and golden bush-peas, but, alas, autumn time just produces a drab scene. Then a vigorous walk up the hill, and a resident family of Blue Wrens was observed. They quickly flitted for cover, well hidden by a large patch of dense growing Bracken. A little way off Incoll Road, about twenty plants of *Genoplesium morrisii* (Bearded Midge Orchid) were found, some flowering and some still in bud. This plant is quite small, about 14cms high with a purplish brown bearded labellum and one green bract. Though considered rare in the district, perhaps it is more common than reported. Its small size and brownish colouring would make it difficult to find.

Next was a stop at Enfield Reference Area where a lone Satin Flycatcher was observed in the tree tops and where also, Grey Fantails and a Scarlet Robin moved about. Also seen and growing at the base of an old tree stump was an early season toadstool with a pretty bright purple-red cap.

For the afternoon part of the excursion, members travelled along Staffordshire Reef Road. A stop was made to admire a large tangled *Cassytha melantha* (Coarse Dodder Laurel), that draped itself over a sapling eucalypt. Identifying features of this *Cassytha* are the large green globular fruits that mature to a brown colour, stout parasitic stems and the blackish buds. Also found nearby was *Cassytha pubescens* (Downy Dodder Laurel), a widespreading twiner that was clinging to other plants at ground level. This plant was the third species in the genus *Cassytha* to be found for the day. There are only three species of *Cassytha*

to be found in the Ballarat district, so it was pleasing to see all three on the one day.

Other plants of interest were :-

Astroloma humifusum	-	Cranberry Heath
Banksia marginata	-	Silver Banksia
Centaureum erythraea	-	Common Centaury
Dipodium punctatum	-	Hyacinth Orchid
Epacris impressa	-	Common Heath
Eriochilus cucullatus	-	Parsons Bands
Gratiola peruviana	-	Austral Brooklime
Isotoma fluviatilis	-	Swamp Isotome
Lobelia pratioides	-	Poison Lobelia
Persoonia chamaespeuce	-	Dwarf Geebung
Pterostylis parviflora	-	Tiny Greenhood

Rainy weather brought the afternoon to a close and so ended a very pleasant day.

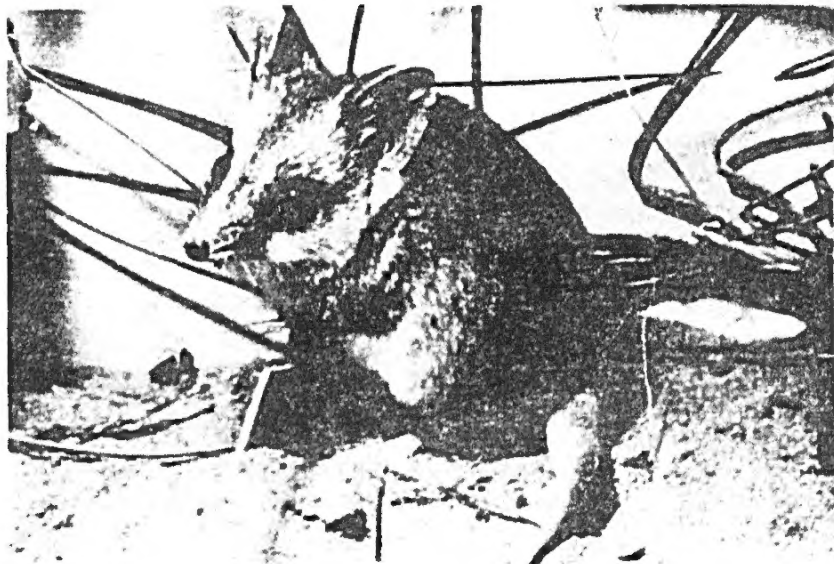
PM

Enfield Excursion Bird list.

Seen enroute Brown Falcon, Yellow Tailed Black Cockatoo, Long Billed Corella.

At Enfield.

Crimson Rosella, Scarlet Robin, Eastern Yellow Robin, Satin Flycatcher, Grey Fantail, Superb Fairy Wren, White-browed Scrub Wren, Brown Thornbill, Striated Thornbill, Varied Sitella, White throated Tree Creeper, Red Wattlebird, White Bared Honeyeater, Brown Headed Honeyeater, Spotted Pardelote, Striated Pardelote, Gold Finch Grey Kurrajong, Australian Magpie, Australian Raven



FAT. TAILED.
DOWNY.

Native Australian Mammals.

In order to come to grips with the immense numbers and varieties of animals, they are named and classified according to international convention. Some of the classifications are also names in common use. The elements of the classification of mammals are set out below. There a number of names applied to the subclasses, orders, suborders, superfamilies and families. There is evidence that 180 to 250 million years ago mammals evolved from reptiles, mammals are in effect improved reptiles some of these groups have become extinct but three have survived they are the Monotremes, the Marsupials and the Eutherians. All living mammals are readily distinguished from reptiles by being warmblooded, feeding their young on milk and having hair.

In Australia these are the egg-laying mammals:- Subclass Prototheria and includes only one order the Monotremata. Monotremes lay soft shelled eggs and nurture their young on milk secreted through ducts. The name Monotremata (one hole) refers to the single opening from which all body wastes are voided, and in females the eggs are laid. The semen of males is discharged through a penis.

The Marsupial subclass Metatheria or Marsupalia. Their most striking feature is that they are born in an embryonic condition; Tiny naked and with hind limbs and tail still undeveloped.

Living Marsupials fall into four major groups. The South American O'possum (Didelphidae) The carnivorous marsupials, the omnivorous marsupials and the basically herbivorous.

The carnivorous or predatory marsupials order Polyprotodontae suborder Dasyuromorphia and the omnivorous suborder Peramelamorphia

The herbivorous order Diprotodonta
Other orders are:- the bats order Chiroptera sub order Megachiroptera and suborder Microchiroptera Order Rodentia suborder Myomorpha and the orders Pinipedia, Sirena, Cetacia and the Carnivora The orders Lagomorpha, Perissodactyla, Artiodactyla suborder Suiformes, suborders Tylopoda, Ruminantia, and the last order is Primates sub order Simiinae.

Elfin.